

Ambassador Reeker Speech for Afghanistan Deployment Send Off
March 26, 2010 2:00 pm - Ilinden Barracks, Skopje

Thank you very much. President Ivanov, Minister Konjanovski, General Stojanovski, Officers, and Soldiers.

As the personal representative of the President of the United States, I want to thank you for your forthcoming service as part of the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan.

Чест ми е што сум овде денес и што можам да прочитам од писмото кое пристигна утрово, адресирано до Претседателот Иванов: Почитуван Господине Претседателе: Ви пишувам за да ви се заблагодарам за дополнителниот број на војници и обучувачи кои Република Македонија планира да ги испрати во Авганистан. Со овој придонес, Република Македонија е една од земјите кои испратиле најмногу војници по глава на жител во ИСАФ. Ви посакуваме постојан успех на вашиот контингент во мисијата. Со почит, Барак Обама.

The United States and NATO applaud your long term commitment to international security - deploying nearly 500 soldiers through eleven rotations in Iraq, more than 1200 soldiers to date to Afghanistan, as well as participation in the United Nations mission in Lebanon, and the EU Althea mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Your upcoming mission in Afghanistan, in particular, is ground breaking and founded in our longstanding, bilateral friendship. It marks the culmination of over 15 years of ongoing cooperation between the Vermont National Guard and the Republic of Macedonia.

The readiness of the fine Macedonian soldiers here today was highlighted during numerous joint training exercises over the last year, the most recent of which ended just last week. I know that you are committed to putting your training to use in the important missions you will undertake in theater.

To the soldiers: Soon you will deploy and be embedded within US Army platoons, standing shoulder to shoulder with my countrymen. The Rangers will serve in Sharan, Paktika, partnering with Afghanistan National Army troops in combined operations; the Military Police will conduct operations in Parwan with both the Afghan National Police and National Army units; Special Forces members will serve on a Personal Security Detail for the Brigade command as they travel throughout the country between units.

When discussing his new Afghanistan strategy in December last year, President Obama highlighted the necessity of the mission in Afghanistan being international in nature and stressing the value America places on the contributions of its Allies. He said, "Our friends have fought and bled and died alongside us in Afghanistan. Now, we must come together to end this war successfully. For what's at stake is not simply a test of NATO's credibility - what's at stake is the security of our Allies, and the common security of the world."

This will be a demanding mission, the most demanding undertaken thus far. The training provided to you by the Ministry of Defense will serve you well. Your efforts will directly help make Afghanistan a more stable and secure country.

Дозволете ми да ги пофалам и да им се заблагодарам и на семејствата и на пријателите кои ги подржуваат овие војници. Вашата пожртвуваност и посветеност на вашите војници се од големо значење за успехот на една мисија и не поминуваат незабележани

Macedonia has answered President Obama's call "to come together." On his behalf, I thank you for your continued service and for Macedonia's contributions to global peace and security.

Your country is honored by your dedication to duty and the world will be a safer more secure place as a direct result of your resolve.

Thank you and Godspeed.
Ви благодарам, и среќно!
Ju faleminderit dhe ju uroj fat!